



HORIZON SONGS

GRACE DUFFIELD GOODWIN



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HORIZON SONGS

BY

GRACE DUFFIELD GOODWIN

"South as the heart cries; North as the blood sings;
West as the dead go; East as the light comes."



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TO
AN IMPERISHABLE MEMORY

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NATURE

THOU REMEMBEREST

"Thou rememberest that we are dust."

"He remembered that they were wind."

GOD of the Universe, what dost Thou ask
Of a handful of dust?

Is there no gauging of strength to the task
When the master is just?

'Neath the terrible wheels we have cried, we
have striven

When o'er the King's highway His chariots are
driven.

Who, hearing, shall pity? Who, seeing, shall
care?

We are dust on the air.

GOD of the Worlds, dost Thou heed from afar
When the wind on the sea

Forgot of the wave, and unheard of the star
Cries, wailing, to Thee?

The black of the midnight enfoldeth alone
The voice of our grieving, the plaint of our
moan;

What fiat of destiny framed us to be
Winds lost on the sea?

Great Worker, Great Dreamer, love smote
Thee to lean
Down the spaces of splendor that lightened be-
tween;
To touch this dull earth till each clod was
athrill
And write in its dust the plain word of Thy
will;
To breathe in the winds on the dark of the sea
The breath of Thy spirit—a challenge from
Thee.
O great the remembrance, and mighty the
trust!
Thou knowest, O God, we are wind, we are
dust!

“THE EVENING AND THE MORNING”

Dusk—and a star!

The great gloom gathers slowly on the trees,
Thrusts out remorseless from the crevices
The lingering light that flies into the West
To die on drowning sunset's submerged breast;
The world is cast adrift upon the wide
Swift current of the dark's engulfing tide,
No haven and no anchorage, until far,
Lightens—a star!

Dawn—and a bird!

The vague, prophetic splendor of the day
Spreads its dim garment on the untrod way;
The earth lies on the dreaming edge of sleep,
And over all expectant tremors creep,
Touched with a sweetness that grows poignant
 pain,
Then shivers back to ecstasy again;
And through the tensity of dawn deferred,
Wakens—a bird!

DAWN

WHEN the dawn-star whitens
In the flushing east,
When the young birds' clamor
Suddenly has ceased,
When the breeze is breathless
On the upland way,—
In that one tense moment,
Silence—Tremor—Day.

Life's pale stars are slipping
From the hand of night;
Heavenly hills in shadow
Catch the growing light;
Love and Faith that, faltering,
Through the gloom have trod,
Know in Death's dawn-moment
Silence—Rapture—God!

FOR THE SEA

How am I pent, that hunger for the sea,
In close, green prison of a narrow vale,
Where sobbing breath is choked and seems to
fail,
With panting for the wind to set it free!

The smooth skies bend above the smoother
green;
Trees crowd upon me; flowers flaunt and
flare;
The heavy, heated, perfume-laden air
From dawn to dusk lies motionless, serene.

Star-friended through mysterious ways of
night,
My soul into thy solitude would flee,
And gladly, orphaned of the world, lay claim,
Strong Mother of the hearts of men, to thee.

WHENCE COMETH MY HELP

STRONG hills, unreproachful, unchanging,
For souls that would worship as I—
Who am restless, inconstant, and weary,
But true to the hills and the sky,—
Bend near me,
And hear me,
Though answerless still to my cry.

As a pagan can pray, self-deceiving,
To gods that are dumb,
So my soul can adore thee, calm hill-tops,
When to thee I come.
And thy curves lining soft against heaven
Are answer that strength will be given,
Flowing free
Into me.

There's a world of my fellows behind me,
And fretting, and pain;
Deep incomprehension, as wide as
The measureless main,
Is our portion together, for them and for me,
Yet I love them. But now—I am free,
I am free,
Thy vassal, thy pupil to be.

Then take me,
Ye hill-tops, and make me
Breathe deep of your uppermost air;
Let the gracious gold tints of the morning
Be psalm and be prayer;
For the soul gaining strength from your uplift
Braves noontime and care.

But tell me, ye merciful hill-tops,
To whom do ye pray?
Who gives you your might and your meekness,
The calm of your day,
That ye have free for sparing
To all who come caring
To bow and obey?

The God of the hills in His heart bears
The strength of the world,
From the might of the mountains to slenderest
Force there impearled
In the dewdrop. The gold of the morn is His
smile.
Slow we learn. God is waiting the while
Till our hearts shall reach high as the hills,
And we see
That all strength and all calm and all beauty
Is He.

SURPASSED

THE urgent gull strives down the sweeping
wind;

The lark, aspiring, sings in viewless sky;
Yet I, who have so hoped and dreamed and
loved—

How less than these am I!

O radiant gull, thy calm of tireless flight,
Unresting peace, be mine;
And thou, Familiar of the skies, teach me
An ecstasy like thine!

THE HARBOR-MOTHER

THE little boats from the ocean glide,
Hurrying home with the eventide
 For shelter and rest
 To the peaceful breast
Of the harbor-mother, whose arms stretch
 wide.

As she quiets each quivering, weary wing,
This is the song that I hear her sing,
 While the stars hang low,
 And the night-winds blow,
And strong and silent the slow tides swing;

“Rest, little boats, through the deepening
 night—
Rest till the smile of the sun is bright;
 Then away and away
 Through the long, fair day;
Nothing shall hinder your eager flight.

“Sleep now, and rest;
 For that is best,
And calm and safe is the harbor-breast.”

EARTH-LOVE

I THINK that I shall hear, when I am dead,
If even a sparrow twitters overhead;
When June has come, and the wild roses blow,
I shall not stir, mayhap, but I shall know.

No sudden shower may touch my lowly place
Without a tear, responsive, on my face;
Each wind that wakes the fragrance of the fir,
Shall whisper, passing, "Hush, I call to her."

And if a star gleam down through purple
night,
Straight on the snow that lies upon me light,
Perhaps as I shall draw one joyous breath,
The old-time rapture may imperil death.

A SONNET OF OBLIVION

THE earth hath holy places, unadorned
With sculpture or commemorative brass;
Across whose ways unheeding footsteps pass,
Whose memories by forgetfulness are scorned.
Well were it if some solemn voice had warned,
“Tread softly; in this dewy, velvet grass
The daisy grew that Chaucer plucked. Alas,
Such blossoms spring no more, and few have
mourned.”

Nature's true heart alone doth now enfold
The tree where Herrick carved his Julia's
name;
Keats' "little hill"—forgotten long ago.
Yet would that we could bind in grateful gold
The bank of thyme that shares in Shake-
speare's fame,
The path Vittoria trod with Angelo.

ORCHARD AND HILL

No push of buds, no breath of bloom,
 No dream of new leaves soon to be;
No dear communion, bough to bough,
 In orchard sympathy.
 O sad Pine Tree,
 Not these for thee,
But all them, at will, for me.

A solitude of friendless green;
 Winds that have swept a bitter sea;
Wide wastes of midnight sky between
 The distant, heedless stars and thee.
Night, silence, wind and stars and sea!
 O blest Pine Tree,
 Close, close by thee,
I pray thee make a place for me!

THE SONG-BIRD

A BARREN stretch of sunless land,
No tree, no flower;
Bleak, sullen desolation spanned
By skies that lower.

And far above, from earth remote,
Where clouds belong,
A tiny bird with happy note
Burst into song.

Hearken, sad soul! There is for thee
A lesson hidden;
Though all thy life a desert be,
And bloom forbidden,

Remember, though thy fate be sad,
No joyance bringing,
The darkest day will seem more glad
If birds be singing.

REMEMBERED MUSIC

IN MEMORY OF A POET.

ONE song is hushed in the wood,
One strong little throat is stilled,
And the branches are quiet which once
To the melody thrilled,—
While the small cold nest
That the warm wings pressed
Hangs—at rest.

The forest choir sings on
Its glad, triumphant strain,
But yet for the silent voice,
One tree feels a nameless pain,
And the sorrowing stream
Shows the wing's ruddy gleam
In its dream.

The poet whose words rang so bravely
Through darkness and pain,
Has ceased from her singing, and sorrowful
We who remain
Miss the voice that, aspiring,
Unfaltering, untiring,
Sent forth the clear strain.

THE WILD BIRD

THE soul's wild bird on urgent wing
Seeks the wide reaches of the upper air;
Its eager flight that owns no lesser thing
Soars swift as prayer.

Enthralled, beset, in piteous plight
The faltering pinions flutter on the sod;
Poor bird, strive on, still may'st thou win the
right
To nest within the waiting heart of God.

DAWN

THE dewdrop stars, expiring, shine
Where the gossamer mist on the hill lies gray;
And the black moth Night lifts quivering
wings
From the unblown rose of Day.

AN EARLY SONG

THE Spring has come, you say? Spring
never goes;
Spring is not that which comes before the
rose,—
Not that alone,—the far, deep heart of things
Is vital with innumerable springs.

In depth of winter comes a smell of earth,
And pale arbutus flushes 'neath the snow,—
Deep down the life-blood pulses; Spring is
here,—
Brave Spring, sweet Spring, that comes, but
does not go!

SEA-GULLS

THE white gulls follow the flying ship
Afar and afar o'er the solemn deep;
Tho' beating wings may wearily dip,
And battle the wind or the fierce wave-lip,
Yet onward they follow, nor rest, nor sleep.

My soul like a ship has sailed away
From the quiet harbor it loved the best;
Out from the widening, darkening bay
To the far mid-ocean's strong unrest;—
But on and on in the vessel's track
The white-winged memories turn not back.

“LIKE A QUIET NUN”

LIKE a quiet nun with her holy dreaming
The mist-veiled river glides slowly by,
Silent and peaceful and prayer-enfolded
With guardian angels in wind and sky.

At last by the mountain that strong and silent
Hinders her feet on her patient way,
She pauses, and bends in her supplication:
“Absolve me, Father; I come to pray.”

Onward, forgiven, the humble river
Free from the touch of soil or stain,
With gentle murmur is praying, praying,
Telling her beads in the drops of rain.

ANTICIPATION

GRAY wings, brown wings, a-flutter in the pine,
What dream of nests has brought you to this
winter-land of mine?

The snow lies over all the fields, the sky is sun-
less gray

What prescience of the leafing-time has touched
your flight to-day?

Gray wings, brown wings, that hover and that
rest,

There is no place on icy boughs for any feath-
ered breast;

There is no bud on any twig that now fore-
tells the shade

That wavers in the sunlight when the summer
nest is made.

Gray wings, brown wings, a-flutter in the pine,
There is no song for singing in this winter-
land of mine.

No Inn of Birds with a welcome for an all too
early guest;

No song, no bloom, no breeze of spring, no
shelter for a nest.

Gray wings, brown wings, ye soar in fearless
glee;

Brave little denizens of air, ye are more wise
than we;

Once more we were too dull to hear the message
that ye bring:

“ ’Tis not the Spring that sends the birds, but
birds that bear the Spring.”

THE SOUND OF STREAMS

THROUGH twilight woods I wandered, doubt-
ing, worn,
One with the night that settled chill and
slow;
Hearing the wind through trees all tempest-
torn,
Wailing like souls that bear an endless woe;
Yet, to my listening ear a sound was borne
Of small streams singing in the dark below.

Then, timid, weary heart, with pain oppressed,
Wand'ring where all unfriended thou must
go,
Heed not the wind's tumultuous unrest;
For thus, in silence waiting, thou shalt know
There is a sound, of all sweet sounds the best,—
The small streams singing in the dark below.

AFTER THE SHOWER

THE clouds have parted; the burnished blue
Of the sunset sky bends, smiling, over
The dripping meadows, whose jewels shine
On the lordly heads of the purple clover;
And the warm sun kisses, at day's bright close
The rain-wet cheek of the sweetbrier rose.

KIN

THE silken-skirted breeze across the lawn
Tosses the petals of a yester-rose,
O'erbends the grateful garden, and is gone,
Leaving the breathless night to dead repose.

Out from the caverns of the Northern sea,
The tempest-hag, disheveled and forlorn,
Flings wide defiance, crying, "Room for me!
Of the same mother-wind we two were born."

WITH THE STREAM

I HAVE been but a leaf on the stream,
Carried beyond my will
In the sweep and the whirl and the rush
Of a life that is never still.

I have watched the banks by day,
Where the frailest flowers that grow
Are calm and safe, with their roots knit deep
In the quiet earth below.

I have watched the stars at night,
Serene, unmoved, and high;
Nothing they know of the dark below
Where a river is hurrying by.

I am worn with the fret and the rush,
With this fierce, mad haste to be;
And yet, though a leaf, I have lived—I have
lived,—
And the air grows salt with the sea!

THE TRIUMPH

THE small blue heralds of the grass,
With noiseless note of welcoming,
Stand ready near the tented fern
To greet my Lady Spring.

She passes down the woody ways
Whose lazy brooks awake and shout,
And smiles when sudden daffodils
Fling loyal banners out.

The cool brown earth beneath her tread
Grows warm with hope of suns to be,
And opens dim long-dreaming eyes,
Drowsy with mystery.

And bound in chains that never fret,
Among her cheerful captives move
All human hearts that once again
Pledge truth to Spring and Love.

WINTER DAFFODILS

HINTING subtle scents of Springtime,
Perfumed damp of new brown mold,
True to Nature's changeless instinct,
Breathe the hothouse blooms I hold.

Souls like these there are that struggle
Through the warp of their intent,
Still to show that deep within them
Yearns that life that heaven meant.

FROM THE WOODS

HERE in the deep wood's green content
I would be free of the sleepless town,
Deaf to the tramp of those many feet
That plod so patiently up and down.

Free of the noise, the strife, the heat,
Free of the voices of human woe;
Here in this cloistered and cool retreat,
Free of the toilers who come and go.

Here in the green wood's shadowy peace,
Lord, grant me courage and calm again
The better to lighten with loyal heart
The load of the sorrowful world of men.

PILGRIM BROOK

BROWN-COWLED among the cloistered trees
Where no untutored eye may look,
I found, intent on mysteries,
A serious pilgrim brook.

His rosary of pebbles bright
Slipped o'er the sunshine's linkèd chain;
He told his beads from dawning light
Till dusk drew on again.

His patient feet, unhurried, trod
Beneath the arches of the fern;
He gave an alms to thirsty sod
For blessings in return.

Only the guardian stars above
That watch o'er those who fare as he,
Know how he seeks with eager love
The green shrines of the sea.

THE AUTUMN STORM

THE somber afternoon has darkened down
To one low-level plain of threatening cloud,
Among whose masses the slow thunder stirs.
Soon scant, infrequent drops make heavy
 sound

Among the leafage, tossed by rising wind.
Then, sheeted rain drives by—diaphanous.
The tremulous lightning strikes athwart the
 drops

And turns them all to hurtling amethyst;
Then flickers like the slender, half-hid flame
Of some frail light held forth by one who
 stands

In sweeping wind, and shields it with the folds
Of swirling garments; now it tears the sky
From zenith to horizon with a rent
Of purple splendor, fading ere 'tis done.
The night draws swiftly on, and all the heaven
Is silent, flameless, while the storm, appeased,
Calms in persistent graciousness of rain.

THE SPIRIT OF RAIN

IN the first greening and veiling of Spring

Lo, a new, wondrous thing!

Buds of the apple-tree, reddened and round,

Grew breathless a space, nor with gladness
unwound

Their curled petals to perish and fall.

The pine, stern and tall,

From its self-chosen place of command,

Uplifted in air its dark hand;

“Be ye still:

Let the willow at foot of the hill

Cease her love for the ripples that pass,

Let the violets hid in the grass,

Bend them low:

Where the soft, hooded heads of the ferns push
and grow,

None must know.

Have patience, have prayer,

For the joy of the earth is your care.

Now afar o’er the hill I can see

Clouds gathering; motionless be,

Till soft on ye all

Rain shall fall.

Then gladly arise,

And grow fair for the eyes

Of the Rain, who is Lady of May, and whose
touch

Makes the quick-striving pulse to rejoice over
much:

Then the willow shall fling
Her bride-garments of Spring;
And the brook that has grown
To a river shall own
She is fair, and be glad
With a joy grown exultant and mad.
While in happy surprise
Let the low ranks of violets rise,
Their faint censers of perfume a-swing,
Tiny priests, purple-garbed like a king.
And the buds that impatient are pausing,
Over-wrought with the joy they are causing,
Shall declare,
Wide in air,
The perfection of fragrance and bloom
In Nature's uncrowded, great room;
For all shall grow radiant,—plain,
At the touch of the Spirit of Rain."

THE GATES OF PAN

OPEN the gates to me,—lo, I am knocking,
Open the gates to me, Pan of the Hills!
Now in the frost-benumbed darkness enfolded,
Give me the dream and the life which it fills.

I have come over the highways of Winter,
Followed the flight of the cloud and the
wing;
Open the gates to me; give, for I famish
Starved in the primal love-hungers of
Spring.

Tears for you, dreams for you, choked breath
that stifles
Soul-sense and heart-sense with joy of de-
sire,—
These be oblation at Spring's darkened altars,
Reddening with ravished Promethean fire.

Open the gates to me! See, they are parting
Wide to the flood of the gold and the blue.
Who is the god of these green shrines of si-
lence?
Pan of the Dawn, it is you—it is you!

THE POET'S MONTH

MONTH of the poet's year,
Earnest of summer-blue,
Globed in thy dawn-dim dew
Rainbows of promise appear.

Chaucer hath sung of the dawn,
The dew and the daisies of May;
Joyfully forth he hath gone
Ere the first blush of the day,
Eager for spring-blossoms wan,
Glad his devotion to pay,—
Thrilling with May.

Month of the Poet's year,
We are captives of spring—thou art here!

The singer of Scotland who drove
His plow through the fresh-smelling fur-
row,
Guarded each field-creature's burrow,
Full of his great-hearted love;
His was the spirit that strove
Humbly, as worshipers pray,
To sing of the daisy—and May.

Month of the poet's year,
Claim of thine own, thou art here!

Keats with the vow on his lips
Sworn at his mistress's shrine,
Knight-errant of Beauty, now sips
To May in a nectar divine;
Singing of "buds and of bells,"
Intimate secrets he tells
Of blossom, of leaf and of vine.

Month of the poet's year,
Freed from the frost-forged chain,
At last thou art here, thou art here!
Thou weepest in odorous rain,
For joy in thy freedom again.

“I KNOW A LANE”

I KNOW a lane where twilight greens do cheat
The envious sunshine, where the dew-tears cling
Till mid-morn dries them with a mother's kiss.
There you may hear, tho' noon be high in
heaven,

Small wings a-flutter, and the soft dawn-calls
Of busy birds that build their nests low down,
Careless who looks therein,—for none come
here

Save those whose hearts are tuned to tender-
ness.

No brooks there are, but one untroubled rill
Draws close the weeds above its hidden bed,
And sings, as one half-wakened, slumbrously.
There would I be, in that remembered spot,
Which, last of all God's handiwork, did know
His touch, His smile, His verdict,—“It is
good.”

CHILDHOOD

AT BETHLEHEM

UNHEEDED on that night gone by,
The Magi watched a Star on high;
The wondering shepherds left their sheep,
A mother waked her child to keep;
And none beheld, with quickened sight,
A darkened world roll into light.

Strength to enforce God's great commands
Was folded in those baby hands;
Grace to behold a world of sin
Dwelt those pure baby eyes within;
And all the love God could impart
Beat in a Child's all-loving heart.

Across the far Judean hill
The voice of angels soundeth still;
Upon the slopes of Olivet
The breath of prayer ariseth yet;
And cometh now to you and me
Healing and love from Galilee.

Gethsemane's appalling hour
Awakes anew our failing power;
We bow the head and bend the knee
In gratitude for Calvary;
But heaven came closest down to them
Who watched in love at Bethlehem.

THE GOLDEN KINGS

THREE Kings went seeking the manger-bed;
Dark was the night and the way was far;
And ever they sang, for their hearts were led
By the hope of the Holy Star.

Dim was the morn in the cattle-cave;
Dim was the light in a mother's eyes;
The Kings were troubled, their minds mis-
gave,
And were full of a sad surprise.

They laid their gifts where the oxen trod;
Israel's Savior,—can this be He,
This child in the manger the Son of God
With a message of liberty?

Casper knelt by the Baby's side,
(Love not always may understand)
And the gaze of the Child was sweet and wide
As He touched the King's great hand.

Melchior,—deeply his spirit saw—
Raised not his face that was wet with tears;
His heart was stricken with love and awe
And the vision of coming years.

Balthasar, feeling the pressure still
Of childish arms that were far away,
Pressed tender lips with a reverent thrill
To a little foot in the hay.

The years sped on; with faith and prayer
Casper had struggled to understand,
And those whom he succored proclaimed him
there
The King of the Golden Hand.

Melchior, stripped of his kingly pride,
Bore with his people a brother's part;
"Behold how he loves us," they gladly cried,
"Our King with the Golden Heart."

Balthasar's lips were swift to speak
The message of gladness to old and young;
For the love of the Child he had gone to seek
Gave words to the Golden Tongue.

O Golden Hand, O Golden Heart,
O Tongue of Gold,—this bliss unbought,
This joy in which the world bears part,
Jesus, the Child, hath wrought.

THE SHEPHERDS' WAKING

THE night wind swept the lonely fields,
Where weary shepherds silent lay,
Dreaming of toil with heavy brain,
Watching for laggard day.

One turned him in his restless sleep,
Raised drowsy eyes to seek the sky;
"Fair days to come," he slowly spake.
"Shepherds, the dawn is nigh."

A blinding vision filled the air,
Too pure, too bright for mortal ken.
"Glory to God," an angel sang,
"Peace and good will to men."

As those who rouse and grope in dark
With purpose of remembered light,
The shepherds sought the Child whose face
Made the poor shelter bright.

O Lord, we wake, and watch, and grope;
Unvisioned ways our feet have trod;
Lead us, as they, o'er plains of night,
To find the Christ of God!

EMMANUEL—GOD WITH US

SLEEPING in the manger rude
King without a diadem,
All His throne His mother's arms—
Jesus Christ of Bethehem.

Earnest at His daily task
Heeding what the father saith,
Just a boy with thoughtful eyes,
Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

In a strong man's bitter pain
Pleading in an agony,
All the world upon His soul,
Jesus of Gethsemane.

Suffering, dying—praying still,
There upon the cruel tree,
Kingly, crowned with stinging thorn,
Christ, the Christ of Calvary.

IN THE GARDEN

THERE'S a tender Eastern legend,
In a volume old and rare,
Of the Christ-child in his garden
Walking with the children there.

And it tells, this strange, sweet story,—
(True or false, ah, who shall say?)
How a bird with broken pinion
Dead within the garden lay.

And the children, childish cruel,
Lifted it by shattered wing,
Shouting, "Make us merry music,—
Sing, you lazy fellow, sing."

But the Christ-child bent above it,
Took it in his gentle hand,
Full of pity for the suffering,
He alone could understand.

Whispered to it,—Oh, so softly!
Laid his lips upon its throat,
And the song-life, swift returning,
Sounded out in one glad note.

Then away, on wings unwearied,
Joyously it sang and soared,
And the little children kneeling,
Called the Christ-child, "Master—Lord."

A CHILD IN THE GARDEN

TELL me the reason, tender Moss,
Why soft thy cushions be?
"Upon the rocks that once I clad
The Lord Christ bent his knee,
And now I carpet all the earth
For those who pray as He."

What meanest thou, O little Bird,
That singest all the day,
By stilling, as the night draws nigh,
Thy loving, cheerful lay?
"It is because at eventide
Our Lord Christ knelt to pray."

Now tell me why, thou little Flower,
Thy petals shut are laid?
When in the garden darkness falls
Do blossoms feel afraid?
"Ah no! But once we bent our heads
When our Lord Jesus prayed."

Why is it, stately Cedar-tree,
Thy branches incense bear?
"Beneath my boughs the Lord of Life
Has often knelt in prayer.
To guard that sweet love-laden breath
This was the Cedar's care."

MOTHER-ANGELS

WHEN a little child must go
Out from love and warmth and home
Where the winds of winter blow
O'er the trackless dark below,
Must it lost and lonely roam?

No—ah no! Some mother-angel
Tall and gracious, tender-eyed,
Takes the little frightened hand,
Guides across the Lonely Land
Keeping ever close beside.

Mother-angel, when they missed you
From the choiring hosts of light
Well they knew that you were waiting
At the boundaries of night.
And the Heavenly Father smiled—
“She hath gone to meet a child!”

A CHILD'S HYMN

How can little children
 Serve a glorious King?
What have they to offer,
 What have they to bring?
Willing hands for service,
 Eager feet to run
On His mighty errands,
 Till the set of sun.

Will He hear our praying,
 Will He stoop to bless?
Does He bend above us
 In our helplessness?
Yes, He answers always
 When the children cry,
Guiding all their footsteps
 With a Father's eye.

Little hands enfolding
 By His mighty power,
He who formed the Heavens
 Careth for a flower.
He who rules the nations
 Shelters in His arm
All the little children,
 Safe from every harm.

THE LITTLE WHITE LAMB

GREEN are the pastures of Sleepy-Land,
Fresh are the fields and fair;
Wide are the ways to its Wonder-Fold,
And my little lamb is there.

Blue are the skies of Sleepy-Land;
Clear are the brooks and bright;
With a Shepherd-Dream to the Slumber Gate
Went my little lamb last night.

O tall Dream-Shepherd, I pray you, hear!
Fair tho' your pastures be,
Let down the bars, and bring once more
My little white lamb to me.

DREAM-DEPTHS

FAR below ocean's roar and foam,
In the gray-green dusk of the soundless
deep,

Delicate mosses cling and grow,
Dreaming in tremulous, broken sleep.

Below life's striving, its beat and stress,
Its storm of sorrow, its rain of tears,
Our childhood memories cling and sleep
In the dim, cool depths of our silent years.

THE BRAVE HEART

A PRAYER FOR MOTHERS

STRENGTHEN my heart, O God,
For the strain of another day,
When work begins and the toilful hours
Leave never a space to pray.

Quiet my heart, O God,
Though the fever and fret increase,
To know in its deepest solitude
The springs of an inner peace.

Lighten my heart, O God,
To sing on a weary road,
That some may listen and smile beneath
The crush of the whelming load.

Strength and courage and peace,
I ask them, Lord, of Thee,
For these are the angels set to guide
O'er the way that I cannot see.

BLESSING

THE orchard tree, that loves the distant stars,
 Bends low to bless,
Content to friend the people of the grass
 In watchfulness,
And let a grateful bird, for home secure,
 Its praise confess.

Wise mother-heart, to whom is much denied,
 Do thou no less;
Small, clinging arms restrain, and trivial tasks
 Thy days oppress;
Learn the dear teaching of the orchard trees,
 That bend,—to bless.

HER ANGEL

TELL the Father, little angel,
Of my baby's joy;
How the earth-child gives in gladness
Laughter for a toy.

Tell the Father, little angel,
Of my baby's tears;
I, her mother, stoop to kiss them,
Bend to still her fears.

Little angel, pause in silence;
This is not thy care.
The great God himself will listen
To my baby's prayer.

MEMORY

I START and listen as of old,
In watching hours at night,
To hear a little wailing voice
That cries aloud for fright.

The silence is alive with sound;
Across a waste of years,
I bend my face to touch her cheek,
And kiss my baby's tears.

MOTHERS

A DUSKY figure clasping to her heart

A small, warm body, makes her pleading
wild

To an insensate stone; the mother cry—

“Have mercy, O have mercy on the child!”

Before the Man of Galilee, whose arm

Supports a little smiling, drowsy head,

There kneels a woman; this her world-old
prayer:

“Rabboni, bless him,—I am comforted.”

LOVE

LOVE SPEAKS

At the revel of the world
Sat the strong kings, Greed and Power,
While a pilgrim paused without
In the midnight hour.
"Wealth is here for all," they said.
(Is that gold that gleams so red?
Skies are bending black above).
"Tears be wealth," quoth Love.

At the revel of the world
Laughed the great lords, Lust and Fame,
While the night-wind sighing low
Breathed the pilgrim's name.
"Crowns are here for all," they said.
(Are those gems that glow so red?
Never star shines out above).
"Thorns be crowns," quoth Love.

A SONNET OF LOVERS

MEN have loved women after many ways:

Purely, as Dante, making love a prayer

For Beatrice; in a wild despair,

As Petrarch loved, who sang for Laura's
praise;

With strong desire that stained with crime
their days,

As Antony, or Abelard, to dare

Cæsar—or God; or as that one who bare

His Argive Helen Ilium's towers to raze.

Kingdoms and states, honor and faith, have
stood

Unshaken till some fatal moment when

A woman's smile, alluring, shone above,

O'er-dazzling fame or valor, wealth or good.

Priest, scholar, warrior,—so they be men,

In every age they sell their souls for love.

SNOW SUMMITS

Love is not all the valley and the rose;
 Love is the Alpine peak, that, lone and cold,
 Rests uncomplaining in the steady hold
Of Honor's stainless and eternal snows.

Across renunciation's height there glows
 The light of stars that bring all Heaven
 near;
 Who strives to this hath nothing more to
 fear;
Love is not all the valley and the rose.

FOR HELEN

My thoughts are like the little birds,
Your heart is like the nest;
They rove the sky on fearless wings,
To you they come for rest,
Well-knowing, though the world be fair,
Your tender love is best.

My songs are like the little streams,
Your heart is like the sea;
Though through the woods they wander on
So careless, glad, and free,
They seek at last the silent deep—
They come at last to thee.

A SONG FOR HELEN

GOOD-NIGHT, Sweetheart, how often times like
this

Have I looked long into your tender eyes,
Full of a love too sweet to know disguise,
And said, with lips the purer for your kiss,
"Good-night, Sweetheart."

Good-night, Sweetheart, tho' now so far away
That I can see you only in my dreams,
Still, as I kiss the pictured lips it seems
That I can hold you close again, and say,
"Good-night, Sweetheart."

MY LADY'S SONG

SHE mindeth me of little blooms,
So frail and faint and shy,
That grow where, thro' the shady nooks,
A laggard brook slips by;
Of all things sweet and fair and free,
She mindeth me—she mindeth me!

She mindeth me of woodland pools,
Transparent, brown, and deep,
In whose pellucid, amber depths
Long days of sunshine sleep.
Of all things strong and deep and free,
She mindeth me—she mindeth me!

CAPTIVE CONTENT

Love's cagéd bird am I,
Captive content to be;
I have no world beyond the bars,
I seek no liberty.

Such food as Love provides
For hunger's sake I eat;
The birds that dwell 'neath open sky
Find better drink and meat.

What use have I for wings
Whose flight is but a span?
I cannot even build a nest
As God's free creatures can.

Love sent me forth one day
With mocking and disdain;
In fright and loneliness I sought
My prison-house again.

And yet withal I sing
Who may no further rove;
My cage is widest world to me,
Captive content of Love.

LOVE

MASTER of men, no merry child art thou
That girt with playtime weapons in the sun
Dost lilt and laugh through light heart
hours that run,
With trivial blossoms o'er a careless brow.
Not at such errant feet strong hearts shall bow
With penitence for loyalties undone,
With offerings by faith and valor won,
Or heart-break stricken dumb of easy vow.

Thou grave-eyed god, thy temple is the steep
Rough crag of Honor; silent and apart
Thy presence foldeth dark that inner shrine,
Where life's still mysteries, trembling out of
sleep,
Unveiled rise before the pure in heart
Whose holy passion glows akin to thine.

MESSENGERS

THE tender thoughts you think of me
Flutter like wings against my breast,
As birds for which my heart shall be
The waiting nest.

I feel them in the air above
Like the soft touch of living wings;
And one that bears your deepest love
Alights and sings.

O Birds, my Birds, I go my way
But by your flood of soundless song,
Through the long spaces of the day
My soul grows strong.

THE SINGER

THE rough world takes me fiercely by the
throat:—

“Sing thou, and earn thy bread.
Thou canst make music, give us now a song
Ere day is sped.”

“We pay thee well—now tell us of thy pain
In fluent verses strong;
For thou hast suffered. Sing us as we wait
Some mournful song.”

My heart and brain were silent all the day;
My very soul was numb.
I had no songs. For gladness or for pain
My lips were dumb.

Love waked me in the night when stars were
high,
When winds were blowing free:—
“Canst thou not fashion from thy deepest soul
A song for me?”

Then falling like the blossoms of the spring,
So thick they came and fast,
Songs drifted white and fragrant on my soul;
I sang at last.

MID-SEA

Love is the sunlight on the spray,
A rainbow gleam of bliss and tears,
While life's mid-ocean, far away
Darkens with surging fears.

This is the solemn undertone
Of that unguessed, eternal strife;
Each soul must breast the seas alone;
Love is not all of life.

THE UNDESIRED

THEY wrong thee, Love, who prate of joy;
Few are the blisses thou dost bring.
The year holds bitter storm and dark
For one dear day of Spring.

Heavy the crosses thou dost build
And bid us fainting bear;
Thorny the crowns thy pale hands weave
For paler brows to wear.

Gray Memory tendeth graves for thee,
Filling her heart with tears;
And weareth rue and rosemary
Through numb and laggard years.

Is there no place where thou art not?
No spot where we are free?
Yet, vanished—for one look I'd fling
My soul itself to thee.

BONDS

WHEN Dark hath set the vexèd soul
From chain and drudging free,
My thoughts, released, in eager course
Unswerving haste to thee.

When Dawn, with manacles agape,
Their jailer comes to be,
They crowd more close, reluctant gaze,
And turn, wet-eyed, from thee.

Chide not their sullen, captive hour;
Thou hast not known them free;
For then they run, they leap, they soar,—
To be again with thee!

WHEN LOVE WAS YOUNG

Love is bending above the stream,
And his childish face is merry,
As with joy unbounded and hope supreme,
Among the ripples that dance and gleam,
He launches a roseleaf wherry.

Down by the willows the stream grows wide,
On to the river sweeping;
And the roseleaf boat, in its dainty pride,
Is torn and muddy and tossed aside,
While Love on the bank is weeping.

Though Love grows older, though now the lips
Are graver that once were merry,
Though across the sea sail his great white
ships,
Yet I know that still, as each strong bow dips,
He sighs for the roseleaf wherry.

AUCASSIN ET NICOLETE

SWEET his lady, fair of face,
From the turret to the ground
In a moment's breathless space
Glad escape has found.

Swift she takes her wilful way
Past the blossoms drenched in dew,
(What if Aucassin were I—
Nicolette were you!)

Fair white daisies 'gainst her feet
Show less white, less pure than they;
Through the shadowy, moonlit street
Love has found a way.

To the dungeon deep and chill
Comes she where her lover lies,
And the air is all athrill
With his passion-cries.

Sharp and bright her dagger gleams,
As she cuts her yellow hair;
Throws it him who oft in dreams
Kissed and called it fair;

Whispers, ere she turns to fly,
All the old words, dear and true;
(Ah, that Aucassin were I—
Nicolete were you!)

What is left to us to-day
From that simple, elder time?
Just the half-forgotten way
Of a captive's rhyme.

Yet it breathes of courage high,
Strong Love, swift to dare and do;
(Ah, that Aucassin were I!
Nicolete were you!)

IN SILENCE

I THINK of you in the silence,
 Away from the busy throng;
And every dream is a blessing,
 And every thought is a song.

And yet, when I move with others
 Through the cares of a toilful day,
There's a sound in my heart of singing
 That lightens the weary way.

Oh, Love, that I love through the tumult,
 Through tossing and surge and strife,
It is then that I hold you closely
 Down in the deeps of life.

But, Love, that I love in the stillness,
 When hearts are attuned to rest,
It is then that I love you only,
 It is then that I love you best.

FOR NELL

WHEN my sweete girle dothe touche herre
lippes

Untoe ye cuppe his rimme,
You'll sweetnesse at ye bottome finde,
And sweetness at ye brimme.

And he who of ye sugar then
Withe fulle contentment sippes,
Is only one who never knew
Ye sweetnesse of herre lippes.

ON Y VOIT L'AMOUR

I SEE upon the yellowed page
A purple stain;
The book is worn with use and age,
Its thoughts are deep, its words are sage,
It would disdain
So light a thing as love, I fear,
And yet a lover's hand left here,
With loving pain,
The little flower that shows so clear
Its purple stain.

THE BEE

HONEY-DRENCHED in the soul of a flower,
 Unsated with sweet,
Plucked forth, trampled down 'neath the power
 Of alien feet,
Still a-thrill with the warmth of the hour
 When the blossom-heart beat,—

Thus he lies, torn of wing,
Crushed, stunned, with an impotent sting
Thrusting rose-leaves that storm through the
 air;
Only that to hold life from despair.

So merciless Fate
 Bade me go;
From the fragrance and warmth of thy breast
 Swept me low,
And the pitying world in an hour
 Hath forgotten the bee and the flower.

ONE DAY

IN fields close gilt with buttercups
I found a violet;
Its tiny petals half-unclosed
With early dew were wet.
O happy field of buttercups,
O dearer violet!

In all the years of rich content
Whereof you never knew,
I found one little fragrant hour
Impearled with memory's dew.
O happy years of deep content,
O dearer day with you!

AFTER

WHEN the gray boats shiver and bend and flee,
When a salt wind drives from the open sea,
When the strong gull knoweth a storm for a
heart,

We two must part.

For the unforgettable gold and blue
Is dead in the grave of the sun with you;
Joy of my joy,—ah, my grasp was vain:
Thou art changed to pain!

BEYOND RECALL

I HAVE shut the door of my heart,
And locked it with keys of doubt.
I am lonely enough within,
And you are alone without.

There's a feel of storm in the air.
Poor child, you will fear it, too;
You cannot come to my arms again,
'Twill be lonely enough for you.

You will lose your way in the dark;
My love was your guiding light.
And now you are all alone
In the storm and the coming night.

It is safe and warm within,
(But the door is bolted fast,)
I am restless and full of pain,
And I wish that the storm were past.

I almost wish that again
My arms could be opened wide,
And you would come, as of old,
For shelter and love inside.

You will lose your way in the dark;
I almost wish you could see
The light that I hold; but its flame burns low,
'Tis scarcely enough for me.

I wish, oh! I wish it quite,
I long with exceeding pain,
To hold you again, to forgive you again,
To love you with might and main.

Come in—I unbolt the door;
Come back—for I throw it wide;
You are lonely, so lonely, I know, without,
And I am alone inside.

Again and again I call,
Why do you make me wait?
The fire is burning, and love is here,
And the hour is growing late.

You will never come back again?
Is that what the silence saith?
I have shut you out—I have shut you out
To loneliness, dark, and death!

WITH WINGS

HE sang of lands of warmth and sun,
Engirt by orient colors rare,
Where slumbered one with passion's heart
And midnight in her hair.

Yet he who sang lacked daily bread,
And dwelt beneath a sky unkind,
Forgotten of the careless world,—
Unloved and old and blind.

SEA SOUL

THE sullen sea lies cold and gray
And huddled far below
Are the newly dead of yesterday
And the dead of long ago.

Yet once within the sun's embrace,
The blue wave thrilled with bliss,
And Aphrodite's laughing face
Was that incarnate kiss.

O Love, O Death—each soul's dark sea
Holds thy dread secrets well;
Untaught, we sound the mystery
Of Heaven and of Hell.

THE FOOL'S SONG

SOME day, my masters, I shall love no more,—
I who have laughed for love and sung my
song;
Time's cool, gray hands shall turn my hot heart
o'er,
Disdainful, as a wine cup filled too long.
But even as the last red drop is poured,
My lute shall whisper—"Love—not Death—
is Lord."

HELOISE TO ABELARD

You have been grief to me, and blinding pain;
You have been sorrow of an old despair;
Yours was the voice of all things lost and vain;
You bound me burdens that were sore to bear.

You have been joy to me, and catching breath
Of ecstasy that bade my pulses cease;
You have been freedom from the fear of death,
You have been calm of conflict's hard-won
peace.

Your hands have wrung the last red vital drop
Of bliss and woe from my surrendered heart.
Now—life and time and heaven must fail and
stop,
Because, forever, thou and I must part.

HELOISE TO GOD

God, send an angel! I am sorely pressed
In struggle with Love's naked, unarmed
might;

Each particle of power I possessed
I dragged to conflict in the unequal fight,
And I have fought and failed upon his breast
Once more to-night.

How can the little quivering form of Prayer
Stand long between my soul and passion's
power?

She needs must flee to some diviner air
Where dwell those hearts without such
earthly dower

Of life and longing, rapture and despair,
As fill this hour.

God, send an angel! Of Thy sovereign will
Bid Michael bring the hosts of Heaven to
aid

One human soul, lest Love should strike to kill,
And none should guess how as I strove I
prayed,

Knowing if I be smitten stark and still
'Twas God delayed!

THE LIE

How brave the lie was as she flung it out!—

Woman's poor shelter in her hour of need;
Blackening her lips with laughter none might
doubt,

To keep her soul unspotted from the deed.

Not low enough nor mean enough to pay

Truth's awful price—lives twined within her
own;

Oh, easier far, denying day by day

Her soul's high gods that thundered from
the throne!

And when her time comes to be judged for this,

By Him who sees life truly, sees it whole,—

For His eye clean, and bare of earthly bliss,

Stands one who dared to lie to save her soul.

WOMAN'S LOVE

LIFE was a nun all garbed in gray,
Who walked alone, apart,
With smileless lips that moved to pray,
And meek hands on her heart.

Love was a king who chanced to pass
On lightsome quest intent;
He followed o'er the untrod grass
The quiet way she went.

His warm eyes held her for an hour
In that dear garden plot;
The kiss, the token and the flower—
Only the king forgot!

THAT WHICH ABIDES

DEATH has robbed me, Life has robbed me;
Only Love has proven true—
Love that flies above the tempest,
Lost in blue;
Love that wears your smile, your gesture,
Eyes of you!

Thus have I, from Time's strange salvage,
More than Death can take away;
More than Life can hurt or squander
In its day;
Love remains, and smiles upon me
Your old way!

LIFE

CLOISTERED

THE holy cloisters of the inmost Soul
Are full of gray-robed thoughts that silently,
Head bowed on bosom, tell, with trembling
hands,

The well-worn rosary of our daily fears.
What do we ask for them? Peace to be free—
To wander unmolested, safe from speech
Or question from the friend who knows us best.

Ours is the right to bar the outer doors;
To let them pray and weep in darkened halls
As we and they shall deem our life hath need.
The friends outside shall sit them in the sun
Where gay-hued gardens gladden in the wind,
To draw their hearts from lingering round the
door,
Closed, barred, and locked from their too-
kindly eyes.

UPHELD

Love holds me in the hollow of his hand
And bids me try
To pierce the dark that he alone hath spanned,
And reach the sky.

Love holds me in the hollow of his hand
And bids me sing,
While chanting stars and rushing worlds with-
stand
My murmuring.

Love bids me, in the hollow of his hand,
At peace to be;
Content that what I fail to understand
Is best for me.

I sing my song, I struggle hope, or rest;
He bends above:
My frail wings own for their unshaken nest
Almighty love.

SINCE EDEN

THE Tree of Life, in chaos rooted deep,
Rises through evil mists, whose glooming hides
Truth's struggling beams. Its thick-grown
branches bear

Leafage of human peril, passion, pain,
Whose density adds shade to shadow still.
Yet in the stormless upper realm it spreads,
To perfect in eternity's wide air
The wonder-bloom of immortality.

UPWARD

I KNOW, O World, thou art a place of sin,—
The sordid story of thy shame I read;
Lies sound without; strange fires burn fierce
within
And many a face is stamped with lust and
greed.

These things are so, and yet, beyond all this,
Poor sorrowing World, thou hold'st an up-
ward way.
Childhood and Love and Prayer and Hope are
thine,
And on the far horizon lieth day.

OUTCAST

I SAW a beggar at a palace gate,
Who wrapped him in his rags, and stood
alone,
Gazing within, where light and beauty shone,
And where the merry revel lingered late.
I saw him stand, and still in patience wait
Till every guest was gone; but not a moan
Escaped his lips. He stood as carved in stone,
And all his heart was filled with bitter hate.
Then I drew near, and looked upon those halls,
So strange-familiar. Waked as from a
dream,
I felt a wave of anguish o'er me roll;
I knew at last this outcast by the walls,
And in his wretched eyes I saw a gleam,
"This is thy Life," he said; "I am thy soul."

SERVICE

THE slave of dreams goes smiling by,
Turning a song for all who list;
He has almost forgot to hide
The fetter on his wrist.

The slave of dreams sleeps soft and deep,
And wakes with day-long joy endued;
He scarce remembers now the fret
Of golden servitude.

And I have watchings, fastings, prayer;
Desire with stern denial wrung.
The loudest song within my heart
Dies on my lips unsung.

And I have tears for daily bread
And days of longing, nights of pain,
With endless toiling up the steeps
Whose summits none may gain.

Think you that I despair for this?
Across the night-enshrouded peaks
The splendor from the face of Truth
Illumes the soul that seeks.

What though the vision fade and pass,
The dark anew encumbereth me?
My joy is still to serve the Truth,
Erect, aspiring,—free!

CHOICE

WHAT is the cargo, Soul?

The merchandise of kings,
The spoils and gems of lands afar,
Or a freight of trivial things?

Where is the voyage, Soul?

To shores that are steeped in sun?
Or the barren islands of Brief Desire
That shelter when day is done?

The breezes are fair and soft

While the mooring holds in sight,
But his is the guerdon who dares to sail
Where the world is rimmed with light.

YOKEFELLOWS

Love faints, o'erburdened; joy is dead;

How shall I drag my load alone?

Hope walks apart with downcast head,

Nor heeds the moan,

"Is none to help and none to heed

A soul oppressed with direst need?"

Stern Duty answers to the call:

"When all are gone I come to thee;

The burdens 'neath which others fall

Grow light with me;

For I will help and I will heed;

My strength alone shall serve thy need."

THE UNREALIZED

IN the press of the city's fierce restraint
Where the high walls glare on the heated
street,
Where the breath of heaven is thick and faint,
And sound is lost in the rush of feet,
Can you believe, can you feel with me,
That somewhere is shadow and wind and sea?

You cannot? Nor I. My thought with pain
Drags heavily over the hours just fled,
And moves in the heat and the sound again
That surge unquieted through my head.
I shall know there is shadow and wind and sea,
Only when I am unfettered—free.

O God, it is so with our dreams of heaven;
It is even so with our thought of Thee,
All that seems true is the life that's given
To care of our restless mortality.
And yet—when we are at peace and free,
How blessedly true will Thy heaven be!

MAKING THE BEST OF IT

A FOOT of sky thro' a dusty pane,
Yellow with sun, or gray with rain;
Yet you never need look for the sky in vain.

The sad little pain-tossed watcher sees,
If he patiently kneel on his small, tired knees,
A glimpse of the greening tops of trees.

His vision at night is a rosy bar
Of the sunrise splendor, so fair and far;
The hope of his day is an evening star.

But the dream of dreams, and it once came true,
Was a tiny cloud in the patch of blue,
A cloud, and the bird that across it flew.

Sunset skies thro' a dusty pane,
Stars and clouds and the morn again,—
Yet you never need look for the sky in vain.

GRATITUDE

I THANK Thee, Lord, at break of day
When all the East is red with sun,
For health and hope and heart to say,
“I would be part of any way
In which the will of God is done.”

I thank Thee, at the time of rest,
For strength that held the long day through;
Footsore and worn, yet peace-possessioned,
I know the honest toil is best
Of him who strives Thy will to do.

And though the task that I have sought
Transcends my hands' unaided skill,
I thank Thee for this mighty thought—
That all the wonders to be wrought
Lie hidden in Thy perfect will.

MASTERY

I WILL front my life in the hush and pause
Since the last blow fell; I will ask it now
With truth between, and the challenge down,
“Which of us two shall bow?”

Shall I rule my life, or shall it rule me?
Am I lord, or slave? Shall I bend me still
In dull submission to force too strong
For a weakened human will?

No. I am master; tho' wounded sore,
A thrall of dreams, or a fool of chance,
Tho' bound in an ancient servitude
By fetters of circumstance,

Yet, face me, Life that is known as mine!
Thou art the slave. I will wrest from thee
The lash and the chain; I will know myself
Ruler at last—and free!

THE THANKFUL HEART

I THANK thee, Lord, for simple good;
Full well I know it comes from thee;
Its gifts of gladness understood,
O'erbrim the thankful heart of me.

For health and home and human love,—
So great are these, so half divine,
Lord, I would cavil not, nor rove,
Content to call these blessings mine.

I thank thee, Lord, yea, even for this—
The ache of sorrow and the smart,
For comfort deep as grieving is
Comes from thy touch upon my heart.

Before thee, Lord, I would upraise
These treasures which are soul of me;
Lo, with such broken words of praise
I lift a thankful heart to thee.

PRAYER

TONIGHT I lay the burden by,
As one who rests beside the road,
And from his wearied back unbinds
The whelming load.

I kneel by hidden pools of prayer,
Still waters fraught with healing power ;
In God's green pastures I abide
This longed-for hour.

I know that day must bid me face
Courageously my task again,
Serving with steady hand and heart
My fellow men.

To hold my sorrow in the dark,
To fight my fear, to hide my pain,
And never for an hour to dream
The toil is vain ;—

This be tomorrow ; now, tonight,
Great pitying Father, I would be
Forgiven, uplifted, loved, renewed,
Alone with Thee.

RECREANT

LORD, hearken! What am I
To dare to seek thy face,
When beaten in the fight,
And laggard in the race?

What I have done is done. I did not pray
In doubt and darkness for a guiding ray—
The light shone full upon the field that day
I cast my sword away.

Why tempt the onslaught? Who would miss
me there
When distant coward paths showed falsely fair?
There is no plea upon his lips who chose
To flee before his foes!

This, this I would implore—
Not pardon, Lord,—
Only, another chance—another sword!

CROWNS

O CHRIST, they name thee greatest man of men,
Thy purity, thy patience they avow;
The Teacher come from God—they hold thee
thus,
And bind proud wreaths of laurel on thy
brow.

And we, who know thee as the eye knows light,
Almighty love in human semblance borne,
Own sway of piercèd hands; Oh, God's great
heart,
Hast thou forgiveness for a crown of thorn?

THE HOUSE OF GOD

O HOUSE of God, thy memoried walls,
Dearer with every year that flies,
Speak of the faith of those who wrought
With prayer and sacrifice.

Beneath the silence broods a sound
Of holy voices, unforgot;
The brave and patient dead once more
Are in this hallowed spot.

The heritage of love is ours,
A father's zeal, a mother's prayer,
The touch of far-off little hands,—
All these are there.

Ours is the grief of those who wept;
The joy of their success is ours;
Out of the seed in darkness sown
Behold the flowers!

God of our fathers, hear the prayer
We offer humbly unto Thee;
More worthy of the saints in light
May this Thy people be.

CREED

THOU brooding shadow that enfolded earth,
In whose protecting name dark deeds are
done,

Between us and the high, full-risen sun
Thou stand'st, forbidding that the light have
birth.

This is thine excellence, this all thy worth,
That thou hast guarded with thy shade, that
none

Be overcome by stress of heat, nor won
To leave thy shelter in the time of dearth.

Yet now, remove, for we are men and grown;
Strong that we flinch not at the fiercer ray
That strikes where we so long in gloom
have trod.

In the new splendor we shall stand and own
A faith revived, a Life, a Truth, a Way.
Outworn and vain, withdraw,—and show
us God!

FROM THE SHRINE

OH, Best of all good things! Oh, highest
joy

Of dreamful days, of deep, envisioned nights,
Heart of all shadows, blaze of sun-delights,
Sweetness that cannot satiate, cannot cloy!

Art of the poet, I have knelt before
The shrine I sought to in the tuneless days;
My silent soul has paused in wordless praise,
Waiting one iridescent gleam the more;

That gleam—a violet word; a golden thought;
An azure heaven revealed; the woods' green
name;

The crimson tide of passion, hope or
fame,—
The pure perfection of my peace has wrought.

The sullenness of heavy times that go
Slow footed, thick of brain and dull of heart,
These hold no pain for me, no smallest smart,
If through the dark thine altar-tapers glow.

THALATTA

ACROSS the scorching stretch of desert sand,
Where noon glares pitilessly on the waste,
A caravan, toil-worn, yet still in haste
Is pressing on. Tho' scarce they can withstand
Their strong fatigue, yet not on either hand
Seek they repose. The tempting spring they
taste,
Impatient to be gone—for they are faced
Toward that dim line that marks the ocean
strand.

O sea of Truth! whose distant waters shine
So faint and far that hardly we discern
The gleam that guides us, Hope and Faith
can see
Those vast, untrammelled, wind-swept deeps of
thine,
And there are many who, unfaltering, turn
Expectant eyes, and struggle on to thee.

SYMPATHY

IF we should be so quick of heart,
 So keen of sight,
That we could feel each shadow's gloom,
 Each blossom's blight,
The fairest of earth's blue-gold days
 Would turn to night.

If we should grow so swift to feel
 Each human pain
That for each aching human heart
 Ours ached again,
Life were all weariness, and joy
 Grown poor and vain.

Some sounds are lost in silence, though
 We reverent hark;
Some sights are shut from anxious eyes
 By pitying dark.
The limit of the soul's out-gift
 Has finite mark.

PROGRESS

WHEN I've thought the deepest I can,
The strongest, the wisest, the best,
And life's large, excellent plan
Out-widens my narrower breast,
When I'm dead, I say,
They will find the way.

When I've sung my defective songs,
That touch the soul's outermost edge,
When I've gazed at the world's wall of wrongs,
And with labor have entered my wedge,
I shall die at last
And work be past.

But some day those yet unborn
Shall take my unfinished thought,
This work that has eaten and worn;
Then toil did not go for nought.
But what will they do?
If I only knew!

They will write, they will paint, (and well,)
Thought, color, that we have dreamed;
They will plan, sing, struggle, and tell
Of the past, how imperfect it seemed—
When we who are dead,
Are forgot overhead!

NIGHT AND NOON

THE gloom of night is dense and deep;
Rough is the path as we grope along;
Courage, Heart, as the shadows creep,
This is the matin-song:
After the night is noon;
After the journey, rest;
The world will waken in gladness soon
And the heart that sings is blest.

The glare of the sun is hard and hot,
The road is dusty, the way is long;
Shift your burden and heed it not—
This is the even-song:
After the noon is night;
After the journey, rest;
For the wind will wake and the stars be
bright
And the heart that sings is blest.

CONVALESCENT

DAY darkened from the dawn, and softened
round

With silences that spare the nerves of life;
Day, slipping sleepily toward dusk, that soon
Deepens to night, and like a drowsing tide
Lazily washes the new shores of morn.
This, endlessly, until the past becomes
A uniform gray haze; the future grows
Blank and illimitable nothingness.

A little shiver of expectancy;
A window open to the curious sun;
A thin, sweet gust of air across the bed;
A robin's single note; the wafted sound
Of steps that echo through the quiet street.
Then, swift into the sluggish blood there glides
Hope's stinging ichor, Life's new, subtle sense
Of power resurgent from the deeps of death.

FREEDOM

SLAVE souls would flee in terror to escape
Life's bloodhound jaws, Love's lash and toil
and chain,
And brave a thousand deaths no more to know
The unyielding, iron mastery of Pain.

Buy thou thy freedom; lay thy patient hoard
Of daily duty, daily strife, and prayer,
To count thy soul's release,—true freedman
now,
Erect and fearless, thou who daredst not dare!

FUTILITY

My unknown enemy and I
Faced each to each with struggle spent,
Till coward Self gave woeful cry;
“Have mercy, I repent!”

Before those eyes, deep-seeing, stern,
For terror would I cringe and flee;
On chilling fear fall words that burn;
“I am thy Soul. Why lie to me?”

CAGES

ONCE in Florence sat a toiler, weaving cages
light and strong,
And a Poet, meditative, watched his busy
fingers fly;
“Friend, what dost thou? Making prisons
That perchance will hold a song.”
Quick upon him smiled the Poet:
“Friend, God speed thee! Thus do I.”

CATHEDRALS

OLD England turned its dreams to stone,
Bound aspiration to a tower;
Found room for hope where swallows own
The brief contentment of an hour.

New England built of heart and brain,
With strife and victory inwrought
Her better walls of prayer and pain,
Imperishable domes of thought.

THE REMEMBERED LAND

*"And he wept, remembering his father and the Land of
Lyonesse."*

THEY come to me in deeps of night,
They haunt my steps by day,
Those lost and fair and dreaming years
So far—so far away!
And I who know both sin and pain
Am clean as souls that pray.

The unforgot, the visioned years
Are far and far away;
And all the flowering hills of morn
Are touched with twilight gray.
Distant and dear the sunlit path
That leads from yesterday!

For all the noon-day world is wide,
And some are worn and gray,
But deathless dwells the golden dream
Of Love and Yesterday!
Oh, Youth's lost land of Lyonesse,
How far thou art away!

DEATH

GREATER GRIEF

IF Death should turn thy smile to stone,
And bind thy heart in iron frost,
Scarce would I pause to weep alone,
To mourn thee lost.

Since Life makes lips more feverish-gay,
And old love pales in new delight,
'Twould grieve me less if one should say,
"She died to-night."

LAZARUS

BENEATH the leaden eyelid steals
The grayness of a lesser night,
And in the heavy brain there wakes
A sense presaging sight.

The sluggish blood renews with pain
Its tide in icy rigor pent;
And pulsing life with struggle breaks
Death's listless, cold content.

With agonized, exultant pang
The soul resumes its hindering clay;
The inert frame reluctant owns
The old familiar sway.

Out, out into the sunshine, free
As the first man that ere drew breath,—
He grasps those loving human hands
That were too strong for death!

JUDGMENT

WHEN she lay dead,
The many looked upon her face, and said,
"The life is gone, so filled with shining deeds,
So full of ministry to human needs;
And we who loved her are bereft:
What have we left?"

When she lay dead,
A man looked sternly on her face, and said,
"Thank God, the evil of her life is past;
What I have known the world would know at
last.
Now all is silence, peace: for me,
I shall be free!"

When she lay dead,
The great God looked from his wide heaven,
and said,
"Only the One who made it knows the whole
Of strength and weakness in a human soul.
Cease, then, thy wonder; peace; let be:
Leave her to me."

GUARDIANS

DEATH, while thou'rt guarding those I love,
 Bid me keep level pace with thee,
Wear Memory's garment, and a crown
 Of rosemary.

My wise and strong ones! Bid me now
 Draw near for guidance as of old;
Behold, Love's altar-fires a-glow,
 Untouched of cold.

Life, thou too keepest those I prize,
 Though Death walk ever near and free;
And living hands and loving eyes
 Keep faith with me.

My days are joyous, dream-beset,
 Buoyant with Love's untroubled breath;
I run my happy course and trust
 Both Life and Death.

CONFIDENCE

I KNOW not where the Blessèd wait,
 Within what glory-girdled lands,
Nor on what hill of God, elate,
 Redemption's city stands.

Mine eyes are blind because of tears,
 My feet move slow on Sorrow's ways,
And loneliness of earthly years
 Bedims the heavenly days.

Yet even when nearest to despair,
 (God give me grace to suffer then),
I know, I know, sometime, somewhere,
 We find our own again.

LOSS

AWHILE I had forgot him and had drawn
Free breath from pain for just a moment's
space,
But when the night had lifted into dawn
Against the sunrise I beheld his face.

He drew his hand impatient o'er his brow
In the old careless, unforgotten way.
I never guessed my sorrow until now—
I never tasted grief until to-day!

TO MY FATHER

A LOST COMRADE

SPRING came and went; I did not see
Her footsteps on the grass;
I missed the tender minstrelsy
Of birds that watched her pass.

Spring came and went; I did not hear
Her filmy garments stir;
I only felt that she was near,
And grieved because of her.

For you and I have followed Spring
Far as her feet can stray;
And now—what matters anything
Since you have gone away?

TO MY FATHER

A SONG OF GRIEF

THE bird that sings my dead to me
From that far dawn of day,
Is just a common robin
In the weary month of May.

Oh, that month of May was weary
With its drift of apple-bloom,
And the touch of alien sunshine
On the long night of the room!—

On the room's long night of struggle,
And the endless grip of pain—
I wish that I might never hear
A robin sing again.

I wish that I might never see
That bloom across the way.
The heart of Springtime breaks for me
Whenever it is May.

BETWEEN THE HARBOR AND THE HILL

BETWEEN the harbor and the hill
The dead folk lie, serene and still;
Wise with the wonder of the sea,
They fearless face Eternity.

Beneath the sunset and the star
Where naught but peace and silence are,
They lie who make no haste to go
From this good earth that loved them so;
Full well content they seem to be
Within the calling of the sea.

Above their dreaming falls the dew,
Across their sleep strong, faring wings
Wake the old gladness that they knew
In days of far adventurings.
Nor Heaven itself shall teach them yet
That those are blessed who forget.

Between the harbor and the hill,
The earth that bore them holds them still;
The memoried sea draws closer yet,
Until each grave with mist is wet,
Beneath whose silver sheltering fold
Lies the long year's unreckoned gold.

Peace, soul that weeps—you could be still
Between the harbor and the hill;
Peace, soul that strives—you could be free
Below the hill, beside the sea.
No softer grave, no deeper tomb—
O fisher-folk, make room—make room!

ASHES

WHAT hath the gray ash at the last?
Only a past;
Still memories of new leaves that hung
Where nestlings swung;
Dim thoughts of sunlight, breaking through
Where blossoms grew;

Dreams of the faint, awakened spark
That challenged dark;
Bright hopes in splendor upward rolled
From smoke's dun fold,
When all of life, of love, of fame
Burst into flame.

This hath the gray ash at the last:
A memoried past.

TO MY FATHER

HERITAGE

FATHER, who left me long ago,
My soul is kin unto your own,
The dreams and strivings of my days,
Those you have known.

My every turn and trick of phrase
Is borne unknowing in my blood;
My tiny boats ride down some deep
Ancestral flood.

The women of my line were pure,
The men were brave—what credit then
Shall come to me whose pulse-beats stir
Their deeds again?

There was a saint in far-off time
Who meekly bore unhallowed days;
If I a little patience win,
Is mine the praise?

There was a man who loved the right,
And fought God's battle with a sword;
What merit mine if in the strife,
I serve my Lord?

My soul plants footsteps in their own,
And they were brave of heart and high!
Father, is aught of worthiness?
It is not I!

HER HANDS

HER hands lay quiet, cold and still,
By other than her will,
For they were turned to gray
Insensate clay.
Those hands so full of gracious curves,
Hands that so gently fell to rest,
Hurried by love in waking hours,
Clasped softly on her sleeping breast,—
Those hands that spoke a language quick,
With swift, insistent meaning plain,
That fluttered with her speech or moved
Before her laughter's light disdain—

All this has passed away;
Hardest of all to-day,
In this death-sundered hour,
To miss the brave hand's power.
Lord, when I meet her in that far-off land,
First, first of all, grant me to touch her hand!

PAX VOBISCUM

WHEN I die, shall I dream
Of my radiant hopes all agleam,
Of the sunlight that touched the brown depths
of my stream?

When I die, shall I grieve
For the dear, bending faces I leave,
For the close-tangling meshes of love that they
weave?

Ah, not so.
Let them go—
Hope, joy, even love that I know!
Best of all the calm feeling
Of rest that is stealing
Thro' soul-fibres strained with the burdens we
bear.

Just to be very still,
Void of will;
Just to lie like a stone,
Hours alone;
With no knowledge of Heaven, no thought and
no prayer.

With this blessed new freedom from being,
From willing and doing and seeing,
From loving and hoping and sighing;
Done even the last act of dying;
 Of all things bereft;
 Nothing left—
Not even the need to draw breath,—
This, this is the resting of Death.

TO MY FATHER

THE UNSPOKEN

LONG years! And I have lived since you were
gone,

Not all content—yet, for the most part, so;
Seeing with joy a new day rise and grow,
Leaving without regret a yester-dawn.

There has been beauty in the budding trees,
Recurrent spring stirred still the old delight.
Yet not for you the fragrance of the
night;—
Alone I knew the sweeping of the breeze.

Long years of duty, well or illy done,
Ungladdened by your quick, approving smile;
And yet the task itself has seemed the while
A noble struggle, worthy to be won.

The world is good; its burdens to be borne
May bravely rest on souls erect and high.
Yet, all the strength I knew when you were by
Has vanished, and has left the courage worn.

Whether for others' blessing or my own
Not witting have I shirked the joy or pain;
But just to-night it all seems poor and vain;
Come back, come back! I have been long alone.

MOTHER-HUNGER

IF only I could find her, for the mother-hunger's on me;

I want to see and touch her, to know her close beside;

I want to put my head in the hollow of her shoulder,

I want to feel her love me as she did before she died!

In all the world is nothing, love of husband or of children,

In all the world is nothing that can soothe me or can stir,

Like the memory of her fragile hand from which the ring was slipping—

The hand that wakes my longing at the very thought of her.

The window in the sunshine and the empty chair beside it,

The loneliness that mocks me as I find the sacred place—

O Mother, is there naught in the unerring speech of silence

To let me know your presence, tho' I cannot see your face?

Thank God that I have had you ; that we held
each other closer

As women and as sisters and as souls that
claimed their own

Than any tie of blood could bind ! and now my
heart is bleeding,

My heart is bleeding, Mother, and yours is
turned to stone.

Oh, no, I've not forgotten the triumph and the
glory—

I would not bring you back again to strug-
gle and to pain ;

This hour will pass ; but oh, just now, the
Mother-hunger's on me—

And I would give my soul to-night to kiss
your hair again !

A SONG FOR REMEMBRANCE

SHE was a girl of the Spring;
Blue were her eyes as the sea;
April had nothing to bring
Fairer and freer than she.

Heart of a rose did she bear
Or ever June breathed on the way;
Winds of the South were aware
One danced as lightly as they.

Love stayed his hand as he twined
Jasmine and roses and rue,
Whispering "Ne'er shall I bind
My garland of sorrow for you."

Death stood apart in the shade,
Till, wearied of joyance and quest,
Untroubled, unharmed, unafraid,
She turned like a child to his breast.

THE LEGEND OF ISHTAR

FOR C. E. L.

ISHTAR goes seeking the lost,
On through the cold and the heat,
Listening by night and by day
For the sound of his feet.

Queenly, gold-girdled and proud,
She sues who was wont to command;
Through the storm and the darkness she seeks
For the touch of his hand.

Gray grows the gloom of the dawn,
Where the night lingers starless and wild,
And her longing is fiercer than thirst
For the lips of the child.

At the sullen, shut portals of Death,
In the black Halls of Silence and Pain,
For the price of the crown that she wears
She would clasp him again.

Is it days, is it hours, is it years
Since he left her to wander alone?
Just to bend down her face on his hair
She would barter her throne.

Her jewels she flings at the gate;
Her girdle, her sandals she gives,
Her garment of gold, her gold hair,
Just to know that he lives.

One moment the portals unclose;
One moment she sees him in bliss!
O, Ishtar, each mother on earth
Would be beggared for this!

THE MINORITY

"Duchâtel, being ill, had himself carried to the convention on his bed, and, dying, voted the King's life."

Hugo.

God! How the air grows thick! There, raise me up!

Leave me one breath to speak for him, and die.
There's gloom on every brow; on every lip
The sentence trembles. Well I know the end.
Death—death—the King must die! They sit
there, strong

In vigorous manhood—muscles, nerves and flesh
Full-lived, and then—they cast a life away!
The King, the tyrant, dies; their emphasis
Falls hard on "tyrant"—"King"—but not on
"dies."

Think you that as I strangle here for breath
I'll ask another living man to stand
Where I do now, and feel this chilling dread
Of nothingness creep over every sense?
Were Louis Seize thrice tyrant that he is,
No tyranny is great enough for death.
The deepest dungeon and the darkest cell,
Exile, imprisonment, compressed in one,—
All these; I vote for life—for life!
He will at least feel blood within his veins,
Breathe, move, and know there is intensest joy
In telling light from dark and heat from cold.
For me—take this. Spare Louis—Spare the
King!

THE LAST STAND

WHAT is all the fame you strove for
Now you come to die?
All that walked within the sunshine
'Neath the shadows lie.

All that climbed the steeps of power,
Dizzy, nigh to fall,
Loosed their hand-grip in that peril
That confronts us all.

Nothing counts you, nothing helps you,
When you leave the sun,
But the love that you have given,
And the love you've won.

Death, I meet thee fearless-fronted;
This my bribe to thee:
All my living was in loving—
Deal thou tenderly!

NORTHLAND

As desolate as arctic night
That drags the chain of tardy dawn,
Are those far wastes, devoid of light,
Whereinto thou art gone.

For Sorrow's North hath icy ways,
Where pallid groups, without a plea,
Endure the burden of the days
In bitter company.

'Midst grief's grim solitudes they bide;
Forgetfulness the goal they seek;
While Memory, keeping close beside,
Strides strong when they are weak.

Thank God if, in this land of dole,
Too sad for tears, too dark for dreams,
At last upon thy night-bound soul
Hope's wide aurora streams.

THIS HOUR

LORD, make me meet to master common things,
Strong for the strife renewed each opening
day.

Teach me that worthy victory may be won
On fields obscure, by souls too spent to pray.

Bid me to know the moments as they rise
Full-fraught with meanings of the life
divine;

Teach me the lesson of the present power,
That present calm and conquest may be mine.

Loose me from all that hinders in the Past,
Nor let me fear the Future's frowning brow.
To use the utmost gifts of grace and love
There is no moment for my soul but Now.

ULTIMATUM

Poor Earth, sown thick with graves!

Blest Heaven, engirt with stars!

As when a race of slaves

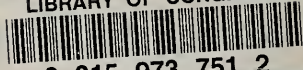
Comes conquering from the wars,

So all the sorrow on the earth long pent

Sees o'er it victory's proud firmament.

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